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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

WOZNIAK, JAMES S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2655	

DATE MAILED: 10/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/681,266

Applicant(s)

MILLER, STEVEN C.

Examiner

James S. Wozniak

Art Unit

2655

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 June 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 February 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. In response to the office action from 5/6/2004, the applicant has submitted an amendment, filed 6/29/2004, amending Claims 1, 6, 7, 12-14, 19-21, 23, and 24, while arguing to traverse the art rejection based on the limitation regarding a system control and speech recognition processor for receiving a first verbal command from a microphone, selecting a function, receiving a second verbal command from the microphone, and assigning the function to an input device (*Amendment, Page 9*). The applicant's arguments have been fully considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection with respect to Wang et al (*U.S. Patent: 6,642,836*), Brant et al (*U.S. Patent: 6,278,975*), and Cox (*U.S. Patent: 6,192,339*).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. **Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-11, 13, 14, and 16-18** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Wang et al (*U.S. Patent: 6,642,836*).

With respect to **Claims 1, 7, and 13**, Wang et al recites:

A microphone for receiving a plurality of verbal commands from an operator (*Fig. 2, Element 34*);

A system control and speech recognition processor for:

Receiving a first verbal command from said microphone (*selection command, Col. 5, Lines 19-37*),

Selecting a function (*control commands, Col. 5, Lines 19-37*),

Receiving a second verbal command from said microphone (*control commands, Col. 5, Lines 19-37*), and

Assigning said function to an input device (*routing a control command to a device chosen by a selection command, Col. 8, Lines 21-46*); and

An input console for controlling said function assigned to the input device when activated by said operator (*manual input means, Col. 2, Lines 33-51*).

Displaying the assigned function on an input display (*Col. 10, Lines 1-2*).

With respect to **Claims 3, 9, and 16**, Wang recites:

The system control and speech recognition processor is programmed to recognize a verbal command as a predetermined verbal command (*Col. 2, Line 52- Col. 3, Line 13*).

With respect to **Claims 4, 10, and 17**, Wang teaches recognition of predetermined commands, as applied to claim 3, which would include function selection commands, as applied to Claim 1.

With respect to **Claims 5, 11, and 18**, Wang recites:

The input console is a foot-input console (*Col. 2, Lines 23-41*).

With respect to **Claim 14**, Wang teaches the microphone applied to Claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. **Claims 2, 6, 8, 12, 15, and 19** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang et al in view of Brant et al (*U.S. Patent: 6,278,975*).

With respect to **Claims 2, 8, and 15**, Wang teaches the means of speech control of medical devices that is capable of recognizing a first and second command and assigning a control command to a particular device, as applied to Claims 1 and 7. Wang does not specifically suggest speech control of a medical imaging device and display, however speech control of such systems is well known in the art as is evidenced by Brant (*Col. 3, Lines 38-45*).

Wang and Brant are analogous art because they are from a similar field of endeavor in speech controlled medical systems. Thus, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to modify the teaching of Wang with the means of speech control for a medical imaging system as taught by Brant to eliminate delays resulting from manual control of medical devices, thus providing for a more time efficient surgical process (*Col. 1, Lines 40-47, and Col. 2, Lines 7-8*).

With respect to **Claims 6, 12, and 19**, Brant teaches the speech control of a medical imaging device and further suggests that the imaging device is an ultrasound (*Col. 8, Lines 47-49*).

6. **Claims 20-25** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang et al in view of Cox (*U.S. Patent: 6,192,339*).

With respect to **Claim 20**, Wang teaches the means of speech control of medical devices that is capable of recognizing a first and second command and assigning a control command to a particular device, as applied to Claim 1. However, in the system and method disclosed by Wang, the first speech command corresponds to a particular device and the second command corresponds to an associated function. Wang does not teach an alternative embodiment in which a function command can be issued before a device selection is specified, however, such a configuration is well known in the art, as is evidenced by Cox (power command request "turn on" followed by a specified device "VCR," Col. 7, Lines 1-12).

Wang and Cox are analogous art because they are from a similar field of endeavor in speech-controlled systems. Thus, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to modify the teachings of Wang with the method of routing a speech command to a particular device by stating a function command prior to a device selection as taught by Cox in order to implement recognition of more natural speech commands by allowing a user to additionally control multiple applications (*Col. 1, Lines 47-48*) via speech using a more natural command form ("*Turn on VCR*" instead of "*VCR turn on*").

With respect to **Claim 21**, Wang further teaches the microphone applied to Claim 1.

Claim 22 contains subject matter similar to Claim 5, and thus, is rejected for the same reasons.

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Claim 23 contains subject matter similar to Claim 20, and thus, is rejected for the same reasons.

Claim 24 contains subject matter similar to Claim 21, and thus, is rejected for the same reasons.

Claim 25 contains subject matter similar to Claim 22, and thus, is rejected for the same reasons.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

- McAuliffe et al (*U.S. Patent: 6,212,541*)- discloses a speech command system capable of switching between applications by recognizing a switching command that precedes a particular application.
- Balakrishnan (*U.S. Patent: 6,233,559*)- discloses a means for speech control of multiple applications that allows a user to open an application by recognizing an open command that precedes a particular application.
- McCall et al (*U.S. Patent: 6,591,239*)- teaches speech control of multiple medical apparatuses that allows a user to assign a particular function to a device.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James S. Wozniak whose telephone number is (703) 305-8669


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and email is James.Wozniak@uspto.gov. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays-Fridays, 8:30-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Doris To can be reached at (703) 305-4827. The fax/phone number for the Technology Center 2600 where this application is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the technology center receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

James S. Wozniak
10/5/2004


SUSAN MCFADDEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER